

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04  
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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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USEEC

DEPARTMENT PASS DEPT OF LABOR

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: ELAB, ILO, SW  
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH SWEDISH TRADE UNION OFFICIALS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. AMBASSADOR, POLCOUNS AND ACTING LABOR  
ATTACHE MET JANUARY 24 WITH THREE TOP SWEDISH LO-TCO  
TRADE UNION LEADERS. DISCUSSION FOCUSSED ON AFL-CIO  
LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, US AND ILO, CURRENT NATIONAL  
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING NEGOTIATIONS, AND HOPES FOR FURTHER  
IMPROVEMENT IN SWEDISH-AMERICAN LABOR RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. AT LUNCH AT RESIDENCE JANUARY 24, AMBASSADOR MET WITH  
THORBJORN CARLSSON AND ERIK KARLSSON, INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIES  
OF THE SWEDISH CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (LO), AND  
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BERTIL AXELSSON, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SWEDISH  
CONFEDERATION OF WHITE COLLAR EMPLOYEES (TCO), AS  
PART OF A STEPPED-UP EMBASSY EFFORT TO DEEPEN THE  
DIALOGUE WITH LEADING LABOR MARKET OFFICIALS.

3. AFL-CIO CONVENTION. THORBJORN CARLSSON AND  
AXELSSON ATTENDED THE LOS ANGELES MEETING AT THE

INVITATION OF GEORGE MEANY (ALONG WITH LO PRESIDENT GUNNAR NILSSON AND SIGVARD NYSTROM, PRESIDENT OF THE RESTAURANT AND HOTEL EMPLOYEES UNION). BOTH SAID THAT THE SWEDISH ATTENDEES WERE IMPRESSED BY THE OBVIOUS SUPPORT THE AFL-CIO LEADERSHIP CONTINUES TO ENJOY AND THE SEVERITY OF CRITICISM LEVELED AGAINST ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS THUS FAR TO REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT AND TO PREVENT JOBS LOST FROM IMPORTS. CARLSSON SAID THE SWEDES WERE EVEN MORE IMPRESSED WITH THE HEAVY PLAY GIVEN IN EVERY SPEECH TO HUMAN RIGHTS--BROADLY DEFINED TO INCLUDE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS--FOR ALL WORKERS, A THEME WHICH IS ALSO STRESSED IN SWEDISH LABOR'S FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENTS. CARLSSON PRAISED THE ADMINISTRATIVE HANDLING OF FOREIGN DELEGATES TO THE CONVENTION AND SAID IT WAS NILSSON'S FEELING THAT THE VISIT TO LOS ANGELES HAD BEEN VERY WORTHWHILE.

4. ILO. BOTH CARLSSON AND KARLSSON SAID THE SWEDISH LO WAS HOPEFUL THAT EFFORTS NOW UNDERWAY WITHIN THE ILO TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE WOULD SOON PERSUADE US LABOR TO VOTE TO HAVE THE US RETURN TO THE ORGANIZATION. SWEDEN AND THE OTHER NORDICS CONTINUE TO BELIEVE DEEPLY THAT US INFLUENCE THROUGH FULL PARTICIPATION IS REQUIRED TO BRING ABOUT ALL DESIRED CHANGE. CARLSSON SAID IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE, IN SWEDISH EYES, IF THE US WERE TO REFUSE TO RETURN UNTIL EVERY ELEMENT OF DESIRED CHANGE WAS A REALITY. IN THAT CASE, HE SAID, THE US RETURN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WOULD NOT COME ABOUT FOR A VERY LONG TIME.

5. WAGE TALKS. THE THREE TRADE UNION LEADERS AGREED THAT CENTRAL NEGOTIATIONS THIS YEAR WERE BEING CARRIED OUT IN AN ATMOSPHERE SOBERED BY PRESSING ECONOMIC REALITIES. NEVERTHELESS, MANAGEMENT'S PROPOSAL FOR A THREE-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH NO WAGE INCREASE OVER THE FIRST YEAR WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE AS A BASIS FOR TALKS. THE LO AND TCO WILL CONTINUE TO INSIST ON A ONE-YEAR AGREEMENT WITH SOME PERCENTAGE OF WAGE INCREASE AND A GUARANTY CLAUSE WHICH WOULD NULLIFY THE CONTRACT WHEN PRICE LEVELS REACH A SPECIFIED POINT.

6. US-SWEDISH LABOR RELATIONS. THE SWEDES AGREED THAT ROOM EXISTS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO LABOR MOVEMENTS. THEY ALSO AGREED THAT A MORE INTENSE EXCHANGE OF VISITS, PARTICULARLY IN THE INTERVALS BETWEEN PRINCIPAL TRADE UNION CONGRESSES, WAS A LOGICAL AREA OF EMPHASIS. IN THIS REGARD, AXELSSON SAID HE WAS CONSIDERING INVITING JERRY WURFF OF THE STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL WORKERS TO SWEDEN. CARLSSON SAID HE HAS RECENTLY INVITED NAT WEINTRAUB, FORMERLY OF THE

AFL-CIO INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT, TO SWEDEN. IN REPLY TO OUR SUGGESTION, ERIK KARLSSON SAID SWEDISH LABOR WOULD WELCOME A VISIT HERE BY JOE GLAZER, ASSUMING THAT SUFFICIENT LEAD TIME WAS ALLOWED.

7. COMMENT. THE MEETING WAS CORDIAL AND INFORMATIVE AND WAS THE FIRST TIME IN SEVERAL YEARS, ACCORDING TO THE SWEDES, THAT SWEDISH LABOR REPS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO REVIEW MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST IN AN INFORMAL ATMOSPHERE AT THE RESIDENCE. THEY FIRMLY RECIPROCATED THE AMBASSADOR'S WISH FOR SIMILAR EXCHANGES PERIODICALLY. IT IS THE EMBASSY'S HOPE THAT THE DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH AFL-CIO AND OTHER AMERICAN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS, WILL URGE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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US TRADE UNIONISTS TO CONSIDER VISITS TO SWEDEN SHOULD THEY OTHERWISE BE IN WESTERN EUROPE. THE EMBASSY WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ADVICE FROM USIA OF THE AVAILABILITY OF JOE GLAZER FOR A VISIT HERE AS A VOLUNTARY SPEAKER, PERHAPS IN THE FALL.  
KENNEDY-MINOTT

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